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SUBJECT: GOR DENIES INVOLVEMENT IN GEORGIAN/POLISH
MOTORCADE SHOOTING

11. (SBU) Summary: The GOR has rejected allegations of Russian involvement in the November 23 shooting at the Georgian-Polish presidential motorcade. In reaction to the incident that garnered little attention in the Russian media, the MFA, MOD and security services unanimously called the incident a Georgian provocation. End Summary.

12. (SBU) The GOR rejected allegations of Russian involvement in the November 23 shooting at Georgian and Polish Presidents Mikhail Saakashvili's and Lech Kaczynski's motorcade as it headed for a refugee camp near the South Ossetian border, and turned the table by painting the GOG as the responsible party. FM Lavrov called the incident a "purely provocative act," claiming the Georgian side organized everything itself, in order to afterward hold responsible South Ossetia or Russia. Lavrov asserted that no gunshots were made from Russian or South Ossetian positions. DFM Karasin accused Georgia of "indulging in wishful thinking" in that regard. A Russian MOD spokesman similarly declared that Russian military in South Ossetia -- at the Russian base or at checkpoints -- did not open fire, and also accused Georgia of provocation. An unnamed source in the Russian special services chimed in to call the incident a Georgian provocation and told Interfax Saakashvili was "repeating himself," as the Georgian president during a recent visit to the town of Gori had been forced to flee from a "nonexistent" air attack.

13. (SBU) In Russian media, the incident has been a non-event. Both the press and television have paid scant attention to the reports, with newsru.com, an internet news site with good coverage of the Caucasus, referring to Polish sources to provide details of the incident.
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